

Story Ideas and Headlines

Berlin Looks Beyond Washington to Engage American People

At a time when America's political tensions with Europe are high, Germany thinks its relationships with the United States are more important than ever.

The Deutschlandjahr – or, the Year of Germany, launching October 3 – highlights the deep historical and cultural ties between the two countries through a year-long initiative focused on creating opportunities for people-to-people dialogue in the United States.

The initiative will bring together more than 200 partners to host more than 1,000 events across all 50 states under the theme of “*Wunderbar Together*.”

“America is not only Germany's partner, but its closest partner outside of Europe,” said German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas. “Despite recent challenges, our countries remain, and must remain, close. Wunderbar Together offers us an opportunity to renew and preserve the historic bonds between our people.”

The German Federal Foreign Office, the Goethe Institut, and the Federation of German Industry (BDI) are partnering to launch the *Deutschlandjahr* in the United States.

German-American Business Ties Are Renewed Under “Wunderbar Together”

A [recent survey](#) of the German business community in the U.S. shows that 25 percent of German companies have apprenticeship programs for their American employees. Apprenticeships are modeled after a common German education program, and highlight one important way the American and German economies help one another.

German companies have created 674,000 American jobs, and Germany is the fourth-largest foreign employer in the U.S. The countries generated \$171.6 billion in shared commerce in 2017.

US-German business ties will be on display through late 2019 as a key pillar of “Wunderbar Together,” a yearlong celebration of US-German relations funded by the German government and supported by the Federation of German Industries (BDI). The celebration features more than 1,000 German-inspired events across all 50 states over the next year.

Dieter Kempf, president of BDI, the organization representing German industry, said German companies help Americans build new skills through apprenticeship programs. “Wunderbar Together is an important opportunity to highlight the many ways our two countries make each other stronger through our economic and business ties,” he said.

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Celebrate German Oktoberfest with “Wunderbar Together”

It's Oktoberfest season, and nearly every city around the U.S. is setting up beer tents and pretzel stands to celebrate. But for the 50 million Americans with German roots, Oktoberfest is more than an opportunity to eat and drink – it's a time-honored German tradition that celebrates their past. That is because Oktoberfest is not a singular event, but the world's largest *Volksfest*, a large event combining a beer or wine festival and a traveling carnival. Oktoberfest is actually a common celebration of German history and culture.

This year there is even more to celebrate, as the German government, in partnership with the Goethe-Institut and the Federation of German Industries (BDI), is highlighting U.S.-German friendship through a yearlong festival called “Wunderbar Together,” which features more than 1,000 German-inspired events across all 50 states over the next year. These events focus on art, architecture, culture, food, and more – proving that there's so much more to celebrate about German culture than Oktoberfest.

German Slackliners to Set the Record for Distance Walked Between Two Hot Air Balloons

A group of German slackliners are currently preparing to set the world record for distance walked between two hot air balloons. They will attempt this feat over the mountains of Monument Valley, the iconic desert range on the Arizona-Utah border, using balloons featuring both the German and American flags.

This will be one of a set of flagship events launching “Wunderbar Together,” a yearlong festival celebrating Germany's close friendship to the United States, funded by the German government and implemented by the Goethe Institut.

This event will be both visually stunning and symbolic, featuring German athletes performing over one of America's most scenic panoramas. Among the slackliners participating in this event will be Alexander Schulz, the current holder of the world record for walking the highest and longest urban highline.

“Wunderbar Together” Celebrates America's Surprisingly German Culture

Once you look for it, it is easy to spot German influence in every aspect of American life. Roughly 50 million Americans claim German heritage, making it the largest ancestry group in the U.S. Approximately 150 American towns are named for German places or people. Many of the foods we eat and the holiday traditions we hold come from Germany, and even beloved Disney classics come from German fairy tales. So many of the cultural norms that feel authentically American are also surprisingly German.

To celebrate this shared culture, Germany is launching a yearlong festival called “Wunderbar Together” featuring more than 1,000 German-inspired events across all 50 states. These events focus on art, architecture, culture, food, and more – proving how deeply influential Germany has been to the United States.

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